

Bangalore

Vidhana Soudha - This imposing edifice built almost entirely of dressed Bangalore granite is a tribute to temple architecture. Housing the Legislative Chambers of the state government, this 46 meter high seat of the government is Bangalore's best known landmark. This is one of Bangalore's most important buildings. Mr. Kengal Hanumanthaiah the then chief minister of Mysore decided to construct the Vidhana Soudha entirely along Indian style of architecture. There are four domes on all the four corners. The main entrance is overshadowed by the four headed lion, the symbol of Indian sovereignty. It houses 22 departments and 300 rooms.



Cubbon Park - In 1864, Lord Cubbon, the then viceroy of India, laid out 300 acres of verdant tranquillity. Today, it remains an oasis of greenery in the heart of modern Bangalore. This beautiful park is the haunt of the seeker of pleasure and tranquillity and is highly popular with walkers, joggers and nature lovers. Complementing the natural beauty of the park are the red Gothic structures of the State Central Library and the High Court. Situated close to the High Court is the State Central Library, worth a visit for its rare treasure of books and building has the "Pompeian red" colour and architectural style of stone and fluted pillars, with walls finished in lime plaster. Apart from its rich flora, Cubbon Park houses a number of institutions of significance like the Cheshire Dyer Memorial Hall, Ottawa Chatter, Museum, Century Club and the Press Club. Phone : 564125

Visvesvaraya Industrial & Technological Museum - This museum is a tribute to the brilliance of Sir M. Visvesvaraya, one of the architects of modern Karnataka, Browse through this building to get an idea of working models of different machines. One of the specialties of the museum is the mobile science exhibition which tours the state the whole year round. It displays an airplane and steam engine in its compound. There is a comprehensive range of exhibits on electronics, motor power and the uses and properties of wood and metal. Visitors who have a deep interest in popular science can work on some of the exhibits here. Seminars, demonstrations and film shows on scientific subjects are organized periodically. The highlight of the museum are the five galleries : Engine hall, Electronic Technology Gallery, Kimbe Paper Metals Gallery, Popular Science Gallery and Children's' Science Gallery. It is located on Kasturba Road Bangalore 560001. Phone : 564014.



Government Museum - A beautiful 1877 structure with Corinthian columns. Being one of the oldest museums in the country, this museum boasts an exquisite collection of coins, sculptures, inscriptions, old paintings and excavated items. The Venkatappa Art Gallery adjacent to the Museum is named after Late K. Venkatappa, a noted artist. You will find a selection of his famous paintings, Plaster of Paris works and wooden sculptures. Also on view are works of various contemporary artists.

Ulsoor Lake - The lake is centrally located, over a space of 1.5 sq. km. A place of prominence in the early years of the century, the lake was then known as "Halsur" or "Alasur". It extended over an area of 125 acres and was constructed by Kempe Gowda during the second half of the second century. It is a major tourist attraction with a boat club where you can hire out cruises with stops at some of the tiny islands that dot the lake. Phone: 573114.

Bangalore Palace - The Bangalore Palace in the heart of the city is a unique edifice inspired by Windsor castle and built in the Tudor style in 1880 at the cost of Rs 1 million. A built-up area of around 45,000 sq. ft., this 110 year old monument is a popular tourist attraction. Built by the Wodeyar King it is surrounded by a garden all around, almost giving it a fairytale setting.

The Fort and Tipu Sultan's Palace- Only parts of the fort remain, standing in mute testimony to the struggle of Tipu Sultan against British domination. Tipu Sultan in the 18th century. The fort is noted for its beautifully carved arches in Islamic style and for the well preserved Ganapati temple. Originally built by Kempe Gowda in 1537. It was extended and fortified by Tipu Sultan. Hyder Ali, Tipu's father had imprisoned David Baird along with a number of British army officers here. Tipu Sultan's Palace close to the fort is now a museum. The palace was started by Hyder Ali and completed by Tipu Sultan in 1791 it took ten years of planning and construction. This was one of Tipu Sultan's summer retreats. It is a two-storied ornate wooden structure with pillars, arches and balconies flanked by gardens on either sides leading to the palace. The eastern and western projecting balconies of the upper floor contained the seat of state from where Tipu conducted affairs of the state. An inscription on the wooden screen describes the palace as the "Abode of Happiness".

Gandhi Bhavan - The teachings of Gandhiji are impacted by the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi, which is in the Gandhi Bhavan located on Kumara Krupa Road. An organized picture gallery depicting the entire life of the Great Mahatma have been maintained by the Gandhi Smarak Nidhi.



Lal Bagh Gardens - This 240 acre expanse of greenery forms one of India's most beautiful botanical gardens. The credit for this goes to the rulers Hyder Ali and his son Tipu Sultan, who laid out an 18th century paradise with rare trees brought from far off Persia, Afghanistan and France. At the heart of the gardens is situated the Glass House. Its design was obviously inspired by the Crystal Palace, London. Flower shows are held here every January and August, with an impressive participation.

Attara Kacheri (High Court) - A two storied building of stone and brick, painted red, Attara Kacheri literally means "The eighteen offices or departments". They originally comprise the general and revenue secretariat of the state government. It now houses the High Court of Karnataka state.

Jawaharlal Nehru Planetarium - Founded in the year 1989, to commemorate the birth centenary of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the Planetarium aims to instil an awareness of astronomy amongst students as well as the common public. The sky theatre with a dome of fifteen meters in diameter has a seating capacity of 225. It also has an observatory with a professional six inch code refractor telescope. Timings: Daily two shows, at 1500 hrs and 1630 hrs except on Mondays. Phone: 2203234, 2266084.

Jumma Masjid - The oldest mosque in the city is located on Old Poor House Road and was once called the Sangian Jamia Masjid. The mosque stands as the reminder of Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb's conquests in the south. The mosque's raised prayer hall is adorned by granite pillars.

Karnataka Folk Museum- The Karnataka Janapadha trust manages this museum where many rare masks, artifacts and costumes are displayed. It also boasts of an impressive collection of folk music and videos of folk dances. It is located at Kumara Park West, Sheshadripuram.

Kumara Park Kanyakaparameshwari Temple- The Temple has a fascinating feature - Marble Mandira, murals of holy places and Darpana Mandira (Mirror Mandir) depicting Rishis, Bhagawada Gita and Vasavi history.

St. Marks Cathedral - This cream coloured Cathedral founded in 1808 and completed in 1812, was consecrated by the Bishop of Calcutta in 1816. This Cathedral is a beautiful colonial structure having a graceful dome over a semicircular chancel that transports the visitor almost immediately into tranquility. Roman arches along the walls are the features of the Cathedral.

St. Mary's Basilica - This Church situated opposite the Russel Market Square was built as a small chapel in 1818 by Abbe Dubois, but was later converted into an ornate Gothic style Church by Rev. L.E.Kleiner. By 1882 a fairly large number of stained glass windows from Paris adorned the Basilica, but were removed during World War II. These were re-restored with great care in 1947. The Church was given the status of a Basilica (then the Sixth in India) in 1973 through a Papal order by Pope John Paul VI.



St. Andrew's Kirk - The only Scottish Kirk in Bangalore, situated on Cubon Road parallel to MG Road contains stained glass windows depicting Lord Jesus and his eight apostles. A pipe organ was also installed here in 1881. The walls are adorned with polished brass plaques. There is also a plaque of John Cook, the Principal of Central College in Bangalore in 1915.

The Bull Temple - The awesome monolithic deity in this temple, Nandi, draws devotees from all over the country. One of the oldest temples in Bangalore situated in Basavanagudi and dedicated to Nandi, the mount of lord Shiva. This 4.5 meters tall and six meters



long monolithic bull is supposed to be older than the temple housing it. It is believed that the source of the river Vishva Bharti originates at the feet of the statue.

ISKCON Temple Complex - This temple is an exquisite blend of modern and traditional south Indian temple architecture. The building houses a multi-vision cinema theatre, ten mini computer aided presentation theatres, Vedic library and a preaching library. The temple has varieties of accommodations to house various types of people, like bramacharis, members, devotees and people taking short term courses offered here. Finally we would like to say that this structure is one of the most beautiful buildings one can ever see. You really have to see it to believe it. So just say Hare Krishna Hare Krishna Krishna Krishna Hare Hare, Hare Rama Hare Rama Rama Rama Hare Hare and look forward to a visit to this place.



Shiva Statue - 65 ft. high depiction of Lord Shiva seated in Lotus position. Backdrop of Mount Kailash with Ganga flowing from matted rocks. The statue looks majestic during the night with its lighting.

Sri Gavi Gangadhar-Eshwara Temple - This cave temple witnesses a unique phenomenon that speaks volumes for the architectural and astronomical skills of ancient sculptors. On 14th/15th January (Makara Sankranti day) every year, a ray of sunlight passes precisely through the horns of the stone bull outside the temple and illuminates the deity (Shiva Linga) inside the cave.

Aquarium - Located on Kasturba Road, the Aquarium is housed in a diamond shaped building. The aquarium has a variety of exotic cultivable as well as ornamental fish. Located at Cubbon Park, Kasturba Road Bangalore 560001. Phone: 577440. Open from 1000 hrs to 1700 hrs.

Bal Bhavan - Children's Park with its own theatre and playground. Toy train and boat rides are added attractions. Closed on Mondays and the 2nd Tuesday of the month. Phone: 564189, 561423.

Around Bangalore

Big Banyan Tree (Ramohalli)-18 Kms. from Bangalore on the Mysore Road. The famed Big Banyan tree spread over nearly four acres is located here. The tree has an awe-inspiring appearance and consists of a vertical root system forming a pleasant complex. Age of this massive tree is around four hundred year.



Nandi Hills - 60 Kms. via Devanahalli. A well-known summer resort. Tipu's Drop is an attraction here. Cottages are available here.

Vishwashanti Ashram-

25 Kms. From Bangalore on Tumkur Road. This spot is still a well kept secret as far as tourists are concerned. Vishwashanti Ashram houses the tallest statue of Vitthala, an incarnation of Lord Vishnu.

Nrityagram Dance Village-30 Kms. From Bangalore via Tumkur Road towards Hessarghatta. This dance village is founded by one of the finest odissi dancers of India - Protima Guari. She built this unique village for classical dancers around the norms of a traditional gurukula, the system of education of ancient India. Here students from all over the world are trained in various Indian dance forms including Bharatnatyam, Odissi and Kuchipudi. Every year, in the first week of February, Nrityagram conducts the Vasantha Habba or the festival of spring.

Shivaganga –

60 kms from Bangalore via Tumkur Road. There are temples dedicated to Gangadhara and Honnadevi. There is a fresh water spring called Pathala Ganga. Regular KSRTC buses are available from Tumkur (20 kms) and Bangalore.



Mekedatu (Goat's Leap) –

98 kms from Bangalore via Kanakapura Road. The river Arkavathi flows through a deep gorge. The Sangameshwara temple is at the confluence of the river Arkavathi and Cauvery. The river flows in a ravine over which a goat can easily leap. Hence the name Mekedatu

Bannerghatta National Park –

About 18 kms from Bangalore is this beautiful national park. The major attraction is the lion safari, which is a wild stretch of forest set apart for animals. A safari van is also available to tour the park. Tuesday is weekly off and this park is open from 09:00 to 17:00 on all other days. There is also an elephant ride available for children.



Ghati Subramanya –

52 kms from Bangalore via Doddaballapur (17 kms from Doddaballapur). Nearest railway station is Makali Durga on the Bangalore - Guntakal line. The famous temple of Lord Subramanya is situated here.

Devarayanadurga –

79 kms from Bangalore via Tumkur. A hill resort. At the foot of the hill there is a natural water spring (Take a deviation at 10th milestone). There is an artificial lake that spreads over nearly 1000 acres. The Indo-Danish Dairy project and Government Horticultural and dairy farms are located here.

Muthyala Maduvu (Pearl Valley)-

44 kms from Bangalore via Brigade Road-Hosur Road-Anekal. A picturesque picnic spot with a waterfall which is 300ft. high. There is a Traveller's Bungalow 6 kms from Anekal Town on the Hosur Road

Whitefield –

16 kms from Bangalore. Sri Sathya Saibaba Ashram is here. A large number of devotees come here from all over the world, for his darshan and blessings whenever he visits the Ashram.

Savanadurga –

58 kms from Bangalore via Magadi Road. A hill fortress which was the hideout of Kempe Gowda. There is a temple dedicated to Narasimhaswamy and Veerabhadraswamy. Accommodation is available at the Traveller's Bungalow.

Kanva Reservoir –

69 kms from Bangalore via Mysore Road. KSRTC Bus Service Available from Bangalore to Ramohalli-Ramanagaram Kanva Reservoir.

Shivanasamudra –

120 kms from Bangalore on Mysore Road. Home for two beautiful waterfalls Gaganachukki and Bharachukki. This has Asia's first hydroelectric power station built in 1905.

Kolar Gold Mines-

120 kms from Bangalore. Kolar is as rich in history as it is in gold. The gold mines here are the deepest mining pits in the world, reaching down to a depth of about 10,000 feet below the surface of the earth. The Secretary, Kolar Gold Mining Undertaking, K.G.F., may be contacted for permission to visit the mines. Bharat Earth Movers factory is also situated here.

MYSORE

Mysore City is surrounded with plenty of places of tourist interest that are beautiful, scenic and holistic.

Including Mysore, places around Mysore have very comfortable climate throughout the year. Also all the facilities that are required by the tourists are available. Boarding is available for all sorts of people who are middle class or upper class accordingly. During dasara festival it is better to book the accommodation before visiting Mysore. There are places nearby Mysore which can be visited from Mysore staying here. There is facility to stay here and go for one or two days of tours.



MYSORE PALACE

The Mysore palace is the major attraction for the visitors. This is built in indo-ceracenic style. Mysore was capital and administrative centre of Wodeyars. Durbar Hall "Diwan-e-Khas" and personal durbar hall are of major attractions in the palace. There are paintings of Raja Ravivarma, Siddalinga Swamy and K. Venkatappa on both sides of the walls. One of the attractions during dasara festival is the Throne" which is kept for public viewing only for 9 days in a year!. "Golden Also the Howdah or used in the elephant parade in dasara festival is "**AMBAARI**" which is attractive and eye catching. This Howdah weighs approximately 715 KGs.

Palace is open from 10:00 AM to 5:30 PM. Entry fee is Rs. 15/-. Apart from the main palace, kings' personal museum is also present and can be entered with Rs.15/- entry fee. Guides are available at the entrance. No cameras are allowed inside. Every Sunday, government holidays and on dasara festival, palace is lit up in lights. Timing of lighting is 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM.

MYSORE DASARA

The Dussehra of Mysore or Mysore Dasara as it is famously called is a 10-day long festival. On the day of Dussehra, a procession of caparisoned elephants carrying the idol of goddess Chamundi is taken through the city.



More information on Mysore dasara festival and photos can be found in my "Mysore Dasara" page.

JAYACHAMARAJENDRA ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS

This zoological gardens is one of the best and large zoological gardens in India which holds lot of rare animals. This zoological gardens has more than 2000 species of animals, birds etc. This zoological gardens holds the credit of reproducing rare and endangered animals in captivity!. Main attractions are the white tiger, chimpanzee, gorilla, penguin, giraffe etc. The zoological garden is open from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. It requires minimum of two hours to cover the zoological gardens. Entry fee is Rs.10/- for adults and Rs.5/- for children.



ST. PHILOMINAS CHURCH

This is one of the largest churches in India. This is built in gothic style of construction and eye catching structure. There are two 165 Ft towers which are beautiful to view. "Krishna raja Wodeyar the fourth" laid the foundation stone for this church in 1933 and was completed in 1941. This church was constructed using monetary benefits from all over the world. This church is visited by people from all religions in the city during Christmas.



CHAMUNDI HILL

This hill is in the outskirts of Mysore city and 13 kms from Mysore is the temple of patron Goddess of Wodeyars, Chamundeshwari. Located on a hill 335 m high, the temple can be approached by 1000 steps. Goddess Chamundeshwari is the household god of people and kings of Mysore. It is said that this temple was constructed in 11th Century. In 1827 the temple was repaired by kings of Mysore. In front of the temple there is a statue of "Mahishasura" the demon king. Mysore was once the city of demon king mahisha hence this place was known as "Mahishooru" and hence "Mysooru" or "Mysore".



Half way towards the temple is the giant monolith Nandi Bull. This 4.8 meter high monolith was originally grey in colour but the application of coconut oil by the devotees has turned it black. This one of the largest statues of Nandi found in India. Close to the Chamundi temple is the giant and colourful statue of the demon Mahishasura. From the hill summit one can have a panoramic view of the Mysore city.



KRISHNA RAJA SAGAR (K.R.S or BRINDAVAN GARDENS)

This important and not to be missed place is located about 15 KMs towards North-West from Mysore city. This place is in "Mandya District". A dam has been constructed across river Kaveri that originates from "Bhagamandala" in Kodagu district and is used for irrigation purposes. This project was dreamt by "Krishna raja Wodeyar the fourth" and brought "Sir M. Vishweshvariah" from Bombay government and took him as Chief Engineer for Mysore State. This dam was completed in 1932 and brought joy and helped the farmers from Mysore and Mandya district.



A garden has been made below the dam using the water resources of the dam. The lighting is fantastic in the night; the main attraction is the "**Dancing Fountain**" where the fountain has been made to sprinkle water according to the music being played. People stay to see this beautiful event.

Brindavan garden is open from 7:00 AM to 8:00 PM daily and during weekends the lighting are done from 7:00 PM to 8:45 PM. There will be lighting on all days during Navarathri or dasara festival.

MYSORE RAILWAY MUSEUM

The Railway Museum at Mysore, the first regional Rail Museum in India was set up in 1979. The Museum sets a good pattern for regional display and has good collections. A circular gallery called Chamundi Gallery has interesting collections of photographs, series of paintings showing the development of the Railways and signalling signs right from its inception.



The adjacent building named Sri Ranga Pavilion houses two Royal coaches that formed part of the Royal train of Maharaja of Mysore reflecting the era of bygone splendour. This pavilion incorporates in its construction beautifully carved wooden pillars, doors and balustrades from the old Srirangapatna Railway Station. It is said that these carved wooden works came from the wooden royal palace of Mysore, destroyed in a fire accident. The saloon used by the Maharajas is now at the National Railway Museum at Delhi. Mysore Rail Museum has the Maharanis' saloon, kitchen and dining care unit. The eight wheeler Maharanis' saloon was built at Mysore Railway workshop in 1899 adjustable to both the broad gauge and meter gauge.

SRIRANGAPATTANA

This place is located about 15 KMs towards North-East of Mysore city and on the Mysore-Bangalore State Highway. This place is on the banks of river Kaveri. One specialty is that this place is an Island! Where River Kaveri splits into two parts as North Kaveri and South Kaveri and again combines near a village called "Ganjam" and the place in between the two parts of the river is the town of srirangapattanam.



Long back this place was the capital city of Mysore kings. This is the place where the legendary king "Tippu Sultan" who lived here. He fought and died while fighting against the British army. There are many places of interest here, of them the "Sri Ranganatha" temple is one of them and this temple is very huge and very artistic in construction. Here the idol of Lord Ranganatha is seen sleeping on "**Kalinga**" the seven-headed serpent. Tippu had a summer palace, which was known as "Dariya Daulat" , where the paintings, gardens are eye-catching and fantastic.



On the city outskirts near the small village of "Ganjam", there is the "Gumbaz" which is the burial place of King Tippu sultan, his father Hyder Ali and his mother. Also near this place is "**Nimishamba Temple**" which is on the banks of river Kaveri.

RANGANATHITTU BIRD SANCTUARY

This place is about 13 KMs towards North-East to the city of Mysore. This bird sanctuary is located on the backwaters of river Kaveri. Nature has made small islands here to facilitate the birds to stay and breed here. Birds from far off places like Siberia, North America migrate here every year to breed new ones and fly back to their own place. The Department of Forests has made arrangements of boating in order to watch the birds. Every year during May and September you can see large variety of birds here. There are separate entry fees for entry into the bird sanctuary and for boating.

NANJANAGUD

This place is 25 KMs towards south of Mysore on the way to Ooty. This is a place of worship and is located on the banks of river "**KAPILA**". The temple here is of prime importance, which is the temple of "**Lord Shreekanteshwara**" (Shiva). The temple here is one of the largest temples of south India. The temple is spread around 1 Acres. There are 121 statues of Shiva in different avatars, also there are 65 Lingas. There will be festival during March and April where lakhs of devotees gather for the occasion.



There is very good bus facility from Mysore City by KSRTC (Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation) a government run bus service in Karnataka to Nanjangud and the journey is of half an hour and costs around Rs. 14/-. Since there is no good facility for staying in nanjangud, visitors stay in Mysore and visit nanjangud.

SOMANATHAPURA

This place is 38 KMs towards east of Mysore. Somanathpur, a small village on the left bank of river Cauvery is an outstanding centre of tourist importance for its wonderful Hoysala temple, dedicated to Prasanna Chennakeshava constructed in 1268 A.D by Soma, an officer of the Hoysala Kingdom. The temple is built on a star shaped plan similar to other Hoysala temples at Belur-Halebid. It is a triple shrine temple, of which two are dedicated to Lord Janardhana and Venugopala, the two different forms of Lord Vishnu.



The Keshava temple is a *trikutachala*, situated in a courtyard 215 ft. in length and 177 ft. in width, surrounded by a *prakara*. It has a verandah along its interior, divided into 64 cells each formally housing a deity. Rows of lathe-turned pillars support the ceiling of their frontage. The temple proper stands on an elevated jagati, which is 3/4 mtr. In height and it is sufficiently broad giving the old structure the shape of a casket. The jagati enables the visitors to go round the temple and have a clear view of the fine sculptures on the outer walls. The jagati is designed with the projections and recesses

in harmony with the contours of the outer wall as is common with any Hoysala temple. The outer wall is divided into two portions. The lowest having rows of elephants, another above having the moving cavalry, the third is a series of creepers and a fourth having a long sculpture gallery depicting the story of Ramayana, Mahabharatha and Krishnavathara. This place can be reached by private vehicle.

BANDIPUR NATIONAL PARK

This is the national game reserve, which is on the road to Ooty and is around 80 KMs south of Mysore City. This forest encompasses areas of neighbouring Tamilnadu and Kerala states. This place is known as heaven of vivid living beings. Here animals roam in freedom. Here some of the important animals are Elephant, Tiger, Cheetah, Deer and Indian Bison. This place can be visited during April to October. Also there is facility of elephant safari. Timings here are from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 3:30 PM to 6:30 PM. Visitors need to make certain arrangements before coming to this place. There is separate entry fee for foreign tourists for elephant safari. There are jungle lodges for stay in here and need to be booked before visiting this place. For more information, "Jungle Lodges and Resorts", Shringar Shopping Complex, M.G.Road, Bangalore or Field Officer, Project Tiger, Aranya Bhavan, Ashoka Puram, Mysore can be contacted.

NAGARAHOLE NATIONAL PARK

This National reserve is about 96 KMs towards North-West of Mysore city and encompasses the districts of Mysore and Kodagu. Visitors can visit this place by staying in Mysore and starting on morning and returning in evening back to Mysore. This sanctuary consists of Elephant, Tiger, Cheetah, Deer, Sambars, pangolins and about 250 species of birds. There are excellent facilities for visitors to stay at the Kabini river lodge and for viewing wildlife. May to September is the suitable time to visit and the timings are from 6:00 AM to 9:00 AM and 3:30 PM to 6:30 PM. There is facility for Elephant Safari and there is facility to stay here. Large rooms costs around thousand a day, there is also facility for large groups to stay together. For more information, " Chief Forest Officer, Wildlife Region (South) Aranya Bhavan, Ashoka Puram, Mysore or Forest sub-officer, Hunsur can be contacted.

Also in this national park, there is "KARAPUR Forest" which is equally beautiful and filled with wild animals. This place is about 80 KMs from Mysore. River Kabini flows through this forest. There is lodge in between the forest and tents are also available. For more information, "Jungle Lodges and Resorts", Shringar Shopping Complex, M.G.Road, Bangalore or Field Officer, Project Tiger, Aranya Bhavan, Ashoka Puram, Mysore can be contacted.

MALAI MAHADESHWARA HILLS or MM HILLS

This place is a religious place, which is in "**Chamarajanagar District**". This place is located about 142 KMs from Mysore. There are seven hills and in the center of the hills is this religious place. The lord Mahadeshwara (Shiva) temple is located in this place.

This is one of the holy places for shaivaites. There are many government run guest houses for the devotees visiting the place. Facilities are good here. There are lots of Tourist buses and private buses plying to and from Mysore. This place can be visited in one day.

BILIGIRI RANGANA HILLS or BR HILLS

This place is a religious place, which is in "**Chamarajanagar District**". This place is located about 90 KMs from Mysore. The temple of lord Biligiri ranga is located on top of the main hill. For people interested in camping and adventure there is K.Gudi jungle camp located on the way to BR hills where they offer jungle trek and other adventure sports. There is lots of Tourist buses to this place and can be visited in one day.

Melkote

Another important pilgrim centre that is close to Mysore is Melkote or Tirunarayanapuram. Melkote is about 60kms from Mysore city and is located in a hilly region that comprises some of the oldest rock formations on earth. Cradled in the middle of these hills is the temple town of Melkote. This town gained religious importance in the 12th century AD when the famous South Indian Vaishnava philosopher and teacher, Sri Ramanuja lived in Melkote for around 12 years.



Life in Melkote is centred around the Cheluvanarayanawamy temple in the town and the Yoganarasimhaswamy temple on the hill overlooking the town of Melkote. It is these temples that have made the town a popular tourist attraction. These temples have helped to preserve the tradition of the town and at the same time is a repository of all the knowledge of culture. The temple premises houses the oldest Sanskrit Pathshala in India that dates back to 1853.

The School continues to provide instruction in Sanskrit and Indian Philosophy. As a result of this rich cultural and traditional heritage it has been found that Melkote has managed to retain its traditional nature over the centuries. Studies have shown that there has been very little change in the town of Melkote. The changes have been minor whether in the town plan, type of houses or cultural practices. So visiting Melkote is like visiting our cultural heritage in its living form.

The festivals held at the temple involve the entire town. Some of the important festivals held in the temple are the Vairamudi Utsava, Teppostsava and the birthday or Tirunakshtram celebrations of important saints. What is unique about Melkote is that some folk festivals like the Angamani festival have been integrated into the temple rituals thus making all celebration meaningful to the common people.

Shravanabelagola

Shravanabelagola is another place worth visiting while at Mysore. Shravanabelagola is famous for the monolith of Bahubali or Gommateshwara. There are two stony hills called Chandragiri and Indragiri. Chandragiri is famous for the Chandragupta Basadi built by the Gangas. Indragiri is famous for the Chavendaraya Basadi and the gigantic statue of Gommateshwara.

Shravanabelagola is an important Jain pilgrimage centre situated on top of the Indragiri hills. The small town of Shravanabelagola is about 84km from Mysore. The hill has 14 basadis or temples and many Jain monasteries. The most famous basadi is the Chavundaraya basadi that was built in 982 AD. The beautifully carved pillar called the Tyagada Brahma Pillar is also found here. The floral designs on this pillar are exceptional. The most important tourist attraction here is the enormous statue of Bahubali or Gommateshwara. He was a King who renounced his kingdom and spent the rest of his life meditating till he attained Nirvana.

The naked statue of Gommateshwara is 58 feet high and 26 feet wide and has 10 feet long feet. The statue was carved out of the black granite of the hill and is a picture of serenity and composure. Thousands of devotees gather here once in 12 years to perform the Mahamastakabhisheka or sacred anointment, which is a grand and extravagant ceremony. Hundreds of pots of curd, milk, honey vermillion, coconut water, turmeric paste and even gold and precious jewels are poured over the statue's head by the priests. The Mahamastakabhisheka will be held this year i.e. 2006AD.

Shivanasamudra Travel

Shivanasamudra is about 85kms to the east of Mysore. At Shivanasamudra the river Cauvery cascades down a deep rocky gorge in two breathtakingly beautiful waterfalls- Bharachukki and Gaganachukki. The sight of these two falls is enchanting and the best time to visit them is during the monsoon. The falls are considered to be one among the 100 best waterfalls in the world. The waterfalls are pristine and are not easy to approach as they are too steep and rocky.



The Bharachukki and Ganganachukki falls are created as the River Cauvery roars down a 75-meter gorge. The river divides around the 700-acre picturesque Shivanasamudra Island. On the one side, it forms the Gaganachukki falls and on the other side are the Bharachukki falls. It is said that the Gaganachukki falls are shaped like a large horsetail and Bharachukki is a jagged crashing cascade. These falls are beautiful no doubt but during the monsoon the falls swell to about 1, 000 feet wide.

This is a famous picnic spot as the surroundings are lovely and pleasing. And one can